

# Aspirations

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we work in spaces      apart  
on definitions   on being   recognition  
   recognized  
& here it is only here   in sight   us  
   in our own arms  
breath into form   us in space where we  
   ask  
   how are we  
what are we when we're out of sight  
   from  
   ourselves  
   do we be  
   can we be  
recognized recognition happens when  
   we  
are us in these spaces   us in this wake  
   over there   over elsewhere  
   how do we be

tell us about the day when Dionne Brand & Christina Sharpe came  
to  
town                  both of us scholars    both Black    women

both of us scholars    both Black    women  
 we think about sexual violence & the woman  
 Black body & the girl Black body & power &  
    tell us a story    they  
 patriarchy & the skein on our skin both of us    ask us  
 living black bodies & like these unceded lands    tell us about the  
    day when Dionne  
 mostly    Brand & Christina  
    Sharpe came to  
 feeling invisible    mostly    town  
 feeling mostly  
 feeling cold    even on this gift of a day    it's  
 warm & the sky above the clouds are blue  
 but it's cold until we see until we're skin kin  
 together

we meet at segal building one of  
 vancouver's heritage buildings once a  
 bank & now described as a remarkable  
 tell us a story of old-world architecture & new-age  
 they ask us  
 tell us about technology  
 the day when  
 the evening of june 9th an auspicious day for  
 Dionne Brand  
 & Christina my father would have been 84 had  
 Sharpe came to this is where we speak to each other  
 town he lived  
 it's a gift of a day warm not raining  
 where we see each other where we  
 the twitter post from Christina a photo  
 note the disjuncture from the  
 obviously taken from above the clouds the  
 performance spaces where we live in this  
 immediacy of social media leads me to  
 where each comes representing but  
 we're read as a foreign other & yet we  
 believe this is a message that she's landing in  
 Dionne & Christina Sharpe & Brand over us like  
 wear our skin dark on land that has  
 vancouver today  
 baptismal water; historicized us as absent and defines us  
 i can barely hold myself together i'm as  
 talk about that they say  
 excited as a girl i get to the grand doors and  
 invisible  
 someone asks if this is the place where yes  
 Lucia asks how  
 it is we walk into a grand hall into ghosts  
 to be inside an  
 that may not show & memories like  
 archive that is  
 impositions from the past  
 full of pain &  
 living as we do in the wake of slavery in spaces  
 violence seek  
 joy where we were never meant to survive or have  
 Dionne  
 been punished for surviving and for daring to  
 says remember  
 make claim or make spaces of something like  
 the detail of the  
 freedom we yet reimagine & transform spaces  
 red ribbon in  
 for & practices of an ethics of care as in repair  
 the description  
 maintenance attention an ethics of seeing & of  
 of the runaway  
 being in the wake as consciousness as a way of  
 slave seek joy  
 remembering & observance that started with the  
 door of no return *in the wake* 130-131

aspiration is the word  
 that i arrived at  
 for keeping & putting  
 breath in the Black  
 body

*in the wake*  
*on Blackness & being*  
 130

the clerk lives in time like this several &  
 simultaneous the author lives in place & not in  
 time weighted in place i am always aware  
 of myself in place there is no universal me i  
 this is where we speak to each other this is where we speak to each other  
 am specific i am the critique of the universal  
 where we see each other where we see each other where we  
 we live distances apart "the blue clerk" 208  
 note the disjuncture from the . note the disjuncture from the performance  
 performance to be inside an  
 spaces we live in this where each  
 spaces we live in this archive that is comes representing but we're read as a  
 comes representing but full of pain & as a foreign other & yet we wear our skin  
 both of us scholars both black women  
 foreign other & yet we wear our skin violence seek dark on land that has historicized us as  
 we think about sexual violence & the woman Black  
 dark on land that has historicized us as absent & defines us invisible  
 body & the girl Black body joy & Dionne & patriarchy &  
 absent & defines us invisible  
 the skein on our skin both of us living black  
 bodies on these uncaded lands mostly so we breathe in words  
 invisible mostly the detail of the of beauty terror  
 mostly red ribbon in strength will  
 both of us scholars both black women  
 the description we hold hands  
 feeling cold even on this gift of a day it's warm & the woman Black  
 the sky above the clouds are blue & then walk back into the  
 but it's cold until we see ourselves of us that will take  
 together bodies on these uncaded lands mostly us through the night  
 both of us scholars both black women joy  
 invisible mostly  
 we think about sexual violence & the woman Black us aglow  
 body & the girl Black body a young woman speaks her words  
 feeling cold even on this gift of a day it's warm &  
 the skein on our skin are like etchings on my scalp & how  
 the sky above the clouds are blue so we breathe in words of  
 bodies on these uncaded lands mostly we come together in a grand  
 but it's cold until we see until we're skin kin  
 invisible mostly applause Dionne acknowledges her of beauty terror  
 together  
 mostly words & her presence strength will  
 feeling cold even on this gift of a day it's warm & we hold hands  
 the sky above the clouds are blue & then walk back into the  
 but it's cold until we see until we're skin kin selves of us that will  
 together breathe us through until  
 morning